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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/603,402	06/24/2003	Michael S. Denny	60027.0192US01/BS # 02375	4851
39262 7590 11/05/2008 MERCHANT & GOULD BELL SOUTH CORPORATION P.O. BOX 2903 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402				
EXAMINER				
ADDY, THUAN KNOWLIN				
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,402

Applicant(s)

DENNY ET AL

Examiner

THJUAN K. ADDY

Art Unit

2614

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-37 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 29-31 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 and 32-37 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/S5108)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's amendment filed on July 22, 2008 has been entered. Claims 1, 18, 21, 29, 32, and 36 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled. No claims have been added. Claims 1-37 are still pending in this application, with claims 1, 18, 21, 29, 32, and 36 being independent.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 29-31 are allowed.

3. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The invention as claimed is not disclosed nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art of record. As to independent claim 29, the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest, alone or in combination, the recited method of creating area party lines, the method comprising wherein the first telephone call providing the area party line indication comprises **dialing at least one digit after the first telephone call was received at the first local call station, the area party line indication corresponding to a geographic area** associated with at least one call station, **receiving a second telephone call at a second local call station** over a second telecommunication link, the second telephone call providing the area party line indication for the first local call station, **transferring the first telephone call from the first local call station to a central call bridging station based on the area party line indication, transferring**

the second telephone call from the second local call station to the first local call station, and from the first local call station to the central call switching station based on the area party line indication, wherein the central call bridging station is configured to accommodate further bridging of calls received subsequent to the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the area party line established between the first telephone call and second telephone call, **receiving a reassignment indication from a caller in the first area party line, and in response to receiving the reassignment indication from the caller** in the first area party line, bridging the caller from the first area party line to a second area party line.

4. Claims 30 and 31 are dependent upon claim 29, therefore, claims 30 and 31 are allowed.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-28 and 32-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Martin (US 6,931,114), in view of Pilat et al. (US Patent Application, Pub. No.: 2003/0225833 A1).
6. In regards to claims 1, 21, 32, and 36, Martin discloses a method, telecommunications switching point, and telecommunications bridging station of and for creating area party lines (e.g., chat rooms) (See Abstract), comprising: receiving a first telephone call at a first local call station directly over a first telecommunication link, the first telephone call providing an area party line indication (e.g., the caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); receiving a second telephone call at the first local call station directly over a second telecommunications link, the second telephone call providing the area party line indication (e.g., another caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); and in response to receiving the area party line indication of the first telephone call and the second telephone call, bridging the first telephone call to the second telephone call at the first local call station to establish a first area party line (e.g., Pop Music chat room) between the first telephone call and the second telephone call, wherein the first local call station is configured to accommodate further bridging of calls received subsequent to the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the first area party line established

between the first telephone call and second telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-11 and col. 4 lines 25-46); receiving a reassignment indication from a caller (e.g., the caller presses one or more buttons, such as "1", on the keypad to enter a different chat room) in the first area party line; in response to receiving the reassignment indication from the caller in the first area party line, bridging the caller from the first area party line to a second area party line (e.g., Rock Music chat room) (See col. 4 lines 47-55 and Claim 18). Martin, however, does not disclose wherein the first telephone call providing the area party line indication comprises dialing at least one digit after the first telephone call was received at the first local call station, the area party line indication corresponding to a geographic area associated with at least one call station. Pilat, however, does disclose the first telephone call providing the area party line indication comprises dialing at least one digit after the first telephone call was received at the first local call station, the area party line indication corresponding to a geographic area associated with at least one call station (See pg. 2, paragraph [0019]). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate these limitations within the method, as a way of establishing multiparty communications based on the desired or chosen geographic area location.

7. In regards to claims 2 and 22, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first telephone call and the second telephone call are landline calls, the first telecommunication link and the second telecommunication line are landlines, and the first local call station comprises a landline SSP (See Fig. 1 and SSP 51) (See col. 3 lines 29-33).

8. In regards to claims 3 and 23, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first telephone call and the second telephone call are wireless telephone calls, the first telecommunication link and the second telecommunication link are wireless links, and the first local call station comprises a wireless telephone base station (See Fig. 1 and base stations 10 and 20) (See col. 3 lines 23-28 and col. 3 lines 30-33).

9. In regards to claims 4 and 24, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: receiving a third telephone call at a second local call station over a third telecommunication link, the third telephone call providing the area party line indication for the first local call station; transferring the third telephone call from the second local call station to the first local call station; receiving the third telephone call transferred from the second local call station at the first local call station; and in response to receiving the third telephone call with the area party line indication, bridging the third telephone call with the first telephone call and the second telephone call to further establish the area party line between the first telephone call, the second telephone call, and the third telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-7).

10. In regards to claims 5, 6, 19, 25, 26, and 33, Martin discloses the method and telecommunications switching point, wherein the first and second telephone calls are landline calls over landline telecommunication links to the first local call station, wherein the local call station is a landline SSP, and wherein the third telephone call is a wireless telephone call and the second local call station is a base station, and wherein transferring the third telephone call comprises directing the wireless telephone call from the base station to the landline SSP (See Fig. 1 and col. 3 lines 23-33).

11. In regards to claims 7 and 27, Martin discloses the method, wherein the first and second telephone calls are landline calls over landline telecommunication links to the first local call station, wherein the first local call station is a first landline SSP, and wherein the third telephone call is a landline telephone call and the second local call station is a second landline SSP, and wherein transferring the third telephone call comprises directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over the public switched telephone network to the first landline SSP based on the indication of the area party line of the first landline SSP provided by the third telephone call (See col. 3 lines 29-33).

12. In regards to claims 8, 20, and 28, Martin discloses the method, wherein directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over the public switched telephone network comprises directing the landline telephone call from the second landline SSP over a long distance network to the public switched telephone network of the first landline SSP (See Fig. 1, Fig. 4, and col. 3 lines 29-33).

13. In regards to claim 9, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: detecting whether the first local call station has reached a maximum area party line capacity; and when the first local call station has reached a maximum area party line capacity, then providing a message to the next incoming call with an area party line indication (See col. 2 lines 4-22 and col. 4 lines 17-46).

14. In regards to claims 10 and 15, Martin discloses the method, wherein the message includes an option to be called back to an area party line when available, the method further comprising: receiving a selection of the option and storing a number for

the incoming call that has provided the selection; detecting when capacity at the first local call station can accommodate an incoming call and then calling the line identified by the number; and upon receiving an answer to the call to the line, bridging the line into the area party line (See col. 2 lines 4-22 and col. 4 lines 17-46).

15. In regards to claims 11 and 12, Martin discloses the method, further comprising upon detecting that the wireless telephone call has switched to a different base station, providing an option to the wireless telephone call to switch to a different area party line, and wherein switching the wireless call to a different landline SSP occurs only when the wireless telephone call selects that option to switch (See col. 4 lines 47-55).

16. In regards to claims 13 and 14, Martin discloses the method, wherein the third telephone call providing the area party line indication for the first local call station comprises the third telephone call dialing an area code and an exchange identifying the first local call station, and dialing a four digit area party line indicator (See col. 1-2 lines 61-3).

17. In regards to claim 16, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: after bridging the third telephone call with the first and second telephone calls to further establish the area party line, receiving a selection from the first telephone call and the second telephone call to enter a private forum; removing the first telephone call and the second telephone call from the area party line upon receiving the selection to enter the private forum; and establishing a connection between the first telephone call and the second telephone call separate from the area party line after removing the first

telephone call and the second telephone call from the area party line (See col. 2 lines 23-35, col. 5 lines 5-13, and col. 5-6 lines 48-5).

18. In regards to claim 17, Martin discloses the method, further comprising: after establishing the connection between the first and second telephone calls separate from the area party line, receiving a selection from the first telephone call and the second telephone call to exit the private forum; ending the connection between the first telephone call and the second telephone call separate from the area party line upon receiving the selection to exit the private forum; and bridging the first telephone call the second telephone call with the third telephone call to add the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the area party line after ending the connection between the first telephone call and the second telephone call (See col. 2 lines 23-35, col. 5 lines 5-13, and col. 5-6 lines 48-5).

19. In regards to claim 18, Martin discloses a method for creating area party lines (e.g., chat rooms) (See Abstract), comprising: receiving a first telephone call at a first local station directly over a first telecommunication link, the first telephone call providing an area party line indication (e.g., the caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW); receiving a second telephone call at a second local call station over a second telecommunication link, the second telephone call providing the area party line indication (e.g., another caller dials 1-800-CHAT-NOW) for the first local call station; transferring the second telephone call from the second local call station to the first local call station based on the area party line indication of the second telephone call; receiving the second telephone call transferred from the second local call station at the first local call station;

and bridging the second telephone call with the first telephone call at the first local call station to establish a first area party line (e.g., Pop Music chat room) between the first telephone call and the second telephone call, wherein the first local call station is configured to accommodate further bridging of calls received subsequent to the first telephone call and the second telephone call to the area party line established between the first telephone call and second telephone call (See col. 1-2 lines 61-11 and col. 4 lines 25-46); receiving a reassignment indication from a caller (e.g., the caller presses one or more buttons, such as "1", on the keypad to enter a different chat room) in the first area party line; in response to receiving the reassignment indication from the caller in the first area party line, bridging the caller from the first area party line to a second area party line (e.g., Rock Music chat room) (See col. 4 lines 47-55 and Claim 18). Martin, however, does not disclose wherein the first telephone call providing the area party line indication comprises dialing at least one digit after the first telephone call was received at the first local call station, the area party line indication corresponding to a geographic area associated with at least one call station. Pilat, however, does disclose the first telephone call providing the area party line indication comprises dialing at least one digit after the first telephone call was received at the first local call station, the area party line indication corresponding to a geographic area associated with at least one call station (See pg. 2, paragraph [0019]).

20. In regards to claim 34, Martin discloses the telecommunications switching point, wherein the telecommunications links are landlines (See Fig. 1 and col. 3 lines 29-33).

21. In regards to claim 35, Martin discloses the telecommunications switching point, wherein the telecommunications links are wireless (See Fig. 1, col. 3 lines 23-28, and col. 3 lines 30-33).
22. In regards to claim 37, Martin discloses the telecommunications bridging station, wherein the telecommunication switching points of the plurality are identified by unique exchange numbers (See col. 6 lines 45-61).

Response to Arguments

23. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-37 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

24. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Baker (US Patent Application, Pub. No.: 2001/0048449 A1) teaches an intelligence driven paging process for a chat room. Naidoo (US 6,629,136) teaches a system and method for providing geographically-related content over a network.
25. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

26. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

27. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to THJUAN K. ADDY whose telephone number is (571)272-7486. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:30-5:00pm.

28. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ahmad Matar can be reached on (571) 272-7488. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

29. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Thjuan K. Addy/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2614